INTRO: Man's interestin immortality universal.

1.Near one of the celebrated passes in the Alps stands a little chapel, the walls of which are lined with the bones and skeletons of once living human beings.

What if the bones of all who ever lived were massed together?

"All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom. The hills
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the Sun, the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between--
The venerable woods- rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green; and, poured
Round all Ocean's gray and melancholoy waste,
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man."

The earth's surface being largely the remains of the once living, the ground upon which we walk is vitally concerned; and, it seems to me, that if present humans were unconcerned, the very stones would cry out.

2. Again, we all are personally interested in immortality because we have loved ones resting in silent and dark graves. For some of us the sun will never again shine so brightly, nor the flowers bloom so beautifully or fragrantly, nor the birds sing so sweetly, because loved ones have departed from our side.

3. Furthermore we see the shadows lengthening and darkening over our own pathways. We all move towards weakness and decay, towards that last shivering moan, that last awful gasp into the dark grave and corruption and nothingness.

Not to be interested in immortality, not to

be vitally concerned over the final disposition of loved ones and of ourselves would be inhuman, an insult to intelligence and a degradation to character.

4.The sum-total of human interest in immortality searching thru all history, all literatures and all sciences focusses most sharply and strongly upon one outstanding fact in the mass of evidence--"Jesus died and rose again from the dead." "Christ is risen!" No other personality awakens such faith in immortality, establishes such assurance of life everlasting in the human heart as does the one who said," I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on me,tho he die, yet shall he live, and whoseever liveth and believeth on me shall never die"

Bearing all this in mind let us read our text in the spirit of thanksgiving- R Peter 1:3-5.

I. OUR LIVING HOPE IN CHRIST.

Our hope of immortality is made alive by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Paul's definition of the Gospel, (1 Cor.15:3-4)"that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried an that he hath been raised on the third day, according to the scriptures". The resurrection of J.C. is the basic fact of the Gospel, marking the overcoming of the last barrier between God and man-Death.

1Jn.5:1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God." vs.12 He that hath the Son hath the Life." The spirit of X beareth witness with our spirits that we are sons of God,

and if sons, then heirs, heirs of grace, joint heirs with X, sharing the glories of God in whom there is no death and to know whom is Life Eternal.

88. WE ARE GUARDED THRU FAITH

Heb.11:1 Faith is assurance of things hoped for, conviction of things not seen.

Faith is the root and inspiring principle of all true religion: faith is an internal confidence in the truth and reality of things hoped for.

Faith in Jesus Christ with reference to man's longing for immortality makes immortality a truth, a fact, a reality.

Faith, or the spiritual acceptance of unseen realities, amounts to a cinviction of their existance.

The subsequent experience of a believer in Christ but adds to his faith. Thus all progress in faith intensifiesconviction.

Faith was the great factor of spiritual life in the history of Israel. Faith has been and is the great factor of sipritual life in J.C.- for see how all believers in Him have been piling up evidence of spiritual realities, until today even the sciences dealing with only material things and their physical properties are rapidly recognizing the universal Spirit or Mind. And see how the hungering, longing sould of man in whatever part of the world or from whatever race is satisfied in a knowledge of God as it is given to us in Jesus Christ, that in Him we live and move and have our being.

III. GUARDED UNTO SALVATION.

1. Salvation here includes two ideas.
a. It is that salvation on which Paul had not yet laid hold (Phil.3:12, Rom.13:11, 1Thess.5:8) a complete victory over the lower self of flesh.
b. A deliverance from trial, persecution and sorrow

2. We are all subject to the weaknesses and limitations of the flesh. We are overcoming some of them very rapidly-thanks to the help of science-; others we are conquering more slowly, and some remain just as they were thousands of years ago. But granted that the time will come when man shall live to be 150 years old on the earth, or, say, 200 yrs. or even 250 yrs, he will still face death as we do now. So far as death is concerned the addition of a few years more or less is of little of any comfort. What we need is to be saved from the weakness and limitation of earthly existance, to be lifted up out of the earthly into the heavenly. And faith in the Risen Christ does just this very thing, it lifts us up into a realization of spiritual oneness with God and gives us assurance that in Him we shall overcome death itself and enter into that state of being wherein we shall understand the full purpose of our earthly sufferings and limitations.

The divine act of translating us from death unto eternal life may be illustrated by the act of a surgeon.

Death the anesthetic of God under which influence the believer sleeps while God fits him for his new life. "O death, where is thy sting?

CONCLUDING THOTS.

1. The infidel princess who died a little over a century ago. Her last instructions - that she be buried in a rock-sealed and iron-

bound grave, and on the stone inscribed,"This burial place, purchased to all eternity, must never be opened." The acorn seed within-it germinated, grew between two of the stones and finally burst the open, and there stands the massive oak at its base a pile of broken rock.

In the sould of man there is a seed of the resurrection life of Christ, which, when his body is laid in the earth or sealed in vault germinates and grows until the sould is liberated and given his freedom and triumph in the spiritual world.

2. Perhaps there are some here in whom this hope does not glow with the assurance and conviction as it did once upon a time. You are like the Resurrection Flower that grows on some desert and arid regions. When it has flowered, its leaves drop off and its branches dry up and become hard, just like dead wood. But as soon as the plant touches water again it it shoots out leaves and becomes alive. Come back to the fountain of Living Water and the hope of immortality within you will blossom again. Come to

"the fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
Where sinners plunged beneath its flood
Lose all their guilty stains.

"Thou dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Sahll never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Are saved, to sin no more.

"E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming Love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die."

Oh, may our Easter this year by one of thanksgiving in our hearts! A triumphant, victorious praise to God in whose Son our hopes and longings are turned into assurance and conviction.

Read the text again.

Margaret Sangster's Easter Thanksgiving.

"Thank God for the dear ones safe today,
Safe at home on the happy shore,
Where the smile of the Father beams for ay,
And the shadows of pain fall no more.
Thank God for the hearts that have done with sin,
For the eyes that shall never be blind with tears,
Thank God for the beautiful, entered in
To the perfect rest of the deathless years.

"Thank God today for the pilgrim feet
Which have trodded the last of the toilsome way
For the strong, for the frail, for the babes so sweet,
Who have left forever this crumbling clay;
Who have changed earth's trial and loss and moan
For the victor's palm and the voice of praise,
Who dwell in the light of the great White Throne,
And join in the songs which the ransomed raise.

"Thank God today for the hope sunlime
Which fills our souls in the darkest hours;
Thank God that the transient cares of time
Are wreathed in the glory of fadeless flowers;
Thank God for the rift in the desolate grave;
'Tis the soldier's couch, not the captive's prison;
He hallowed its portal, who died to save,
And we write o'er its arch, 'The Lord is risen!"